OSWALD EXHUMED, IDENTITY PROVED

By CHARLES LACHMAN

LEE Harvey Oswald's skeletal remains were exhumed yesterday and an autopsy proved beyond any doubt that the body was Oswald's.

The historic findings end 18 years of speculation and shatter the sensational theory that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated by a Russian KGB spy posing as Oswald.

Pathologists in Dallas said impressions made of the corpse's teeth matched Oswald's dental charts taken when he was in the Marine Corps in the mid-50s, before his defection to the Soviet Union.

They also found a bone depression on the back of the skull just behind the ear — remnants of a mastoid operation performed on Oswald in 1945 when he was 6.

"Now I have my answers," said Oswald's widow, Marina Oswald Porter, 40, moments after getting word from the pathologists that it was definitely Oswald's body.

"I always intended for this to be a private matter, but it became public because of circumstances beyond my control," she said.

Teeth match records

"From now on I only want to be Mrs. Porter."

She refused to look at the skeletal remains herself. She ordered the autopsy after British author Michael Eddowes, in his 1976 book "The Oswald File," advanced the theory that the real Oswald was murdered and his identity assumed by a Russian spy.

"Although surprised, I'm not disappointed," Eddowes said.

He said he had accomplished his goal — "to discover the truth of the matter."

British author Eddowes paid the full cost of the exhumation and the fees for the forensic pathologists — $12,000 — out of his own pocket.

Another pathologist, Dr. Irving Sopher, ridiculed the suggestion that Oswald's Marine dental records were faked.

Workers use a back hoe to exhume Oswald yesterday in Fort Worth.

"There is no way . . . We have meticulously examined the records."

The height of the corpse was 5-9, consistent with Oswald's size.

After pathologists worked on the body for more than four hours, medical chief Dr. Linda Norton announced:

"We both individually and as a team concluded beyond any doubt — and I mean beyond any doubt — that the individual buried under the name Lee Harvey Oswald in Rose Hill Cemetary is Lee Harvey Oswald."

Doctors showed Oswald's Soviet-born widow two rings found in the coffin — including one intricate design made in Russia.

She positively identified the rings as those she had placed on Oswald's left pinky just prior to his burial on Nov. 25, 1963.

More than 150 X-rays and photos were taken of Oswald's body from every conceivable angle during the autopsy.

When it was all over, Oswald's corpse was zipped into a black body bag and then the bag and fragments from the original wooden coffin were placed in a new metal casket and driven back to Rose Hill Cemetary in Forth Worth for private reburial.

Mortician Paul Groody said the body would probably not be exhumed again in "our lifetime" and he felt the historical need to preserve it in metal.

William Dear, a private eye in charge of the security detail, said, "The body was badly decomposed, but I could see hair on the scalp.

"The body was falling apart."